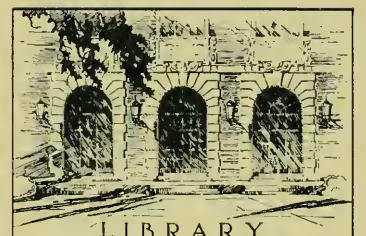

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THE

ARCHBISHOP OF ARMAGH'S

CHARGE.

1845.

A

CHARGE

DELIVERED AT HIS

ANNUAL VISITATION,

1845,

BY

JOHN GEORGE, LORD ARCHBISHOP OF ARMAGH.

LONDON:
JOHN W. PARKER, WEST STRAND.

M.DCCC.XLVI.

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A

CHARGE,

&c. &c.

My Reverend Brethren,

The Established Church in this country, as you are well aware, is exposed at the present period to the combined attacks of opponents who, however they may differ from each other in religion and in the ulterior objects which they have in view, are agreed together in exerting their utmost efforts to accomplish its overthrow. On the part of its friends, therefore, there is need of the greatest energy and unanimity in its defence.

When the British Government, at the close of the last century, with a view to the strengthening of the empire by means of its consolidation, proposed and brought about, not without reluctance on the part of Ireland, the union of the two Kingdoms, it was urged, as a prevailing plea

to induce the Irish Church to surrender its independence, and to place the guardianship of its interests in the hands of a Legislature to be chiefly composed of Englishmen, that the certain result of uniting it into one Church with that of England would be to add to its stability and secure its permanence. It was felt, that the strongest link by which the connexion of the two countries could be maintained, was that of the common faith which binds the Protestants of Ireland to their English brethren. The union of the Churches, accordingly, cemented the union of the kingdoms. Hence, it is, that the democratic party, who now aim at effecting a severance of the two countries, labour most strenuously for the subversion of the Church Establishment; and call upon their adherents to regard it as their "first duty" to exert themselves to obtain its "*total abolition.*" Such is their bold avowal, although, when the first steps were taken to remove their civil disabilities, they were forward to declare, in their public documents, that they "acquiesced with satisfaction in the establishment of the National Church, neither repining at its possessions, nor envying its dignities." And on their actual admission to legis-

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lative power, they still "disclaim, disavow, and solemnly abjure any intention to subvert the present Church Establishment as settled by law within this realm*."

Whether the severe enactments of the penal code, with which we are upbraided, are to be justified or not by the daring attempts made to destroy both the Protestant Religion and the Protestant Government, it is not now the time to inquire. Those enactments are no longer in force. I lament the necessity of such measures,

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* The Petition of the Roman Catholics of Ireland, which was presented to the Irish House of Commons on the 23rd of January, 1792, (the year preceding that in which the elective franchise was conferred upon them,) contained the following declaration:—"With satisfaction we acquiesce in the Establishment of the National Church; we neither repine at its possessions, nor envy its dignities; *we are ready, upon this point, to give every assurance that is binding upon man.*"

The oath which Roman Catholic Members of Parliament take has the following clauses in it:—"I do swear, that I will defend to the utmost of my power, the *settlement of property* within this realm, as established by the laws; and I do hereby disclaim, disavow, and solemnly abjure any intention to *subvert the present Church Establishment*, as settled by law within this realm; and I do solemnly swear that I never will exercise any privilege to which I am or may become entitled, to disturb or weaken the Protestant Religion or Protestant Government, in the United Kingdom."

if the necessity on the part of the civil government existed. And it is matter of the deepest regret to me, as it is to every Churchman, if the severity of them originated in whole or in part in an exclusive spirit, as contrary to the mild precepts of Christianity, as to the general character of British legislation. But the question between us and our opponents, when fairly stated, is not whether the United Church shall be maintained to the oppression of all other bodies of Christians. Toleration the most ample, protection the most complete, is accorded to the professors of every creed. The question regards not the diminution of the income of the Church, or any salutary improvements in its discipline. Large pecuniary sacrifices have been cheerfully made, in order to effect a change in the mode of collecting its revenues, whereby the payment is rendered more easy to the people, and irritation of feelings and collision are avoided: and useful reforms, of whatever kind, where not already effected, are courted, instead of being repudiated, by its ecclesiastical governors. The true question is now reduced to this, whether the Established Church shall continue to enjoy the pre-eminence to which she has been raised by the

purity of her doctrine, the moderation of her principles, and the hold she still retains over the affections of the enlightened part of the community; or whether she shall no longer exhibit a correct standard of religious faith, under the fostering protection of the Government, amidst a population in the greatest need of her spiritual direction; and whether, as a consequence, her endowments, given her for this very purpose, shall be taken away from her?

In the assault which is made upon the Irish branch of the Church, the Roman Catholics are now aided by the Dissenters of England, who employ denunciations as vehement, with regard to our Establishment, as ever proceeded from the lips of the political agitators of this country. A formal announcement indeed has been made by them, that they are "ready to contend by the side of the Roman Catholics" in the war against the Church in Ireland*, and they have "pledged themselves never to remit their efforts" to overturn it. The ultimate object of the Dissenters,

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* See the "Address to the Roman Catholics of Ireland, from the Conference of Protestant Dissenters, held in Crosby Hall, London, on May the 20th and 21st, 1845."

which they have set before themselves as worthy of every exertion in their power, is to put an end to the connexion of Church and State in Great Britain, and to substitute the voluntary system in the place of the national endowment of religion. On the attempt to achieve this object, they seem determined to concentrate all their strength; and, in comparison with it, their former controversies, respecting Episcopacy, and our Liturgy, and doctrines, and discipline, are regarded as minor points. It is because they think a way will be thus opened to them for making a more successful attack on the Established Church in England, that they now lend their aid in the movement against the branch of that Church in this country. They appear to care but little to inquire what would be the consequence to Protestantism in Ireland, were it left to the voluntary system alone, and were the sheltering influence of our Church Establishment withdrawn. They ask not what prospect there would be of supplying, by means of that system, the ministrations of religion to thousands of poor families in remote districts, who would be unable to defray for themselves the expense of a settled ministry; and whose reli-

gion, when deprived of such ministrations, would gradually melt away, until it was lost in the superstition and ignorance that surrounded it. All such considerations the Dissenters of England seem to have put aside, in their zeal to make a practicable breach in the establishment of religion in the empire; and so they make common cause with the Romanists in the assault upon the Protestant Establishment in Ireland.

With the Roman Catholics and Dissenters are also found united in assailing the Irish Church, the revolutionary party, of whatever religion, who seek its subversion from a love of change and dislike of the ancient institutions of the country. And, supported by such a combination of parties, all of them resolute in their hostility, a distinct proposal for the demolition of the Irish Church is annually submitted to the consideration of Parliament*.

Connected with these hostile attacks, and by

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* Another political party, whose organ is the *Oxford and Cambridge Review*, must also, I find, be included among the assailants of the Established Church of Ireland. Since I delivered this Charge, I have seen the number of that periodical for the month of August, 1845, which contains an article upon Ireland, full of misrepresentation, and bitter hostility against the Protestant Church.

way of furnishing some foundation for them, misrepresentations the most gross have been put forth respecting the condition of our Church. And unhappily there exists in England such a degree of unacquaintedness with its affairs, that these misrepresentations readily pass current. The public ear has been so accustomed to hear assertions made regarding our Establishment, which are either wholly false or greatly exaggerated, that, from their constant reiteration, they are supposed to be true*. And, perhaps, sufficient pains have not been taken on our part to remove the misapprehensions to which they have given rise. I will allude to some of them.

And, first, I would refer to the revenues of the Church, which are still spoken of as being "enormous." The "immense riches," the "lavish endowment" of the Irish Church, occupy a prominent place in every speech and pamphlet on this subject. In the last of these publications

* When the late Earl Spencer, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, was introducing the Church Temporalities Act into the House of Commons, in the year 1833, he observed, with reference to the revenues of the Irish Church,—"I will venture to say, that greater exaggerations exist upon this point than upon any other political topic that has ever come under my consideration."—*Mirror of Parliament*, Feb. 12, 1833.

that I have seen*, the attempt is made to lead the British public to believe that tithe, meaning thereby, as it is specifically asserted, a tenth part of the produce of the land, is still paid to the clergy by the cultivators of the soil. Although, even when what was called tithe was formerly paid, it was not a *tenth*, but a *thirtieth* part that was received by them. And since that which was denominated tithe has been commuted into a rent charge, paid by the landlord, it has been diminished by one fourth; and it is, in reality, but a *fortieth* that is paid to the clergy of the Established Church. In other words they receive a fourth part of the tithe†. And, were the

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* *The Catholic Claims. A Letter to the Lord Bishop of Cashel, by* Baptist W. Noel, M.A.

† The evidence given before the Select Committee of the House of Commons, on tithes in Ireland, in the year 1832, by Mr. Griffith, the Commissioner of Valuation for Ireland, fully established the fact, that the proportion which the tithe composition bore to the gross value of the whole produce or increase of the land was less than a *sixtieth* part; the present tithe rent charge is, therefore, less than the *eightieth*. As it was the custom, however, to exempt some kinds of produce from the payment of tithes, I have in view those only which were usually tithed, when I state, that the proportion paid was a thirtieth and not a tenth, and that the rent charge is but a fortieth.

income derived from this source, and from ministers' money, to be divided equally amongst the beneficed clergy, it would yield them (after paying the salaries of their assistant curates) about 230*l.* a-year each. Were it equally shared amongst all the clergy, incumbents and curates, it would not give to each of them an income of 170*l.* If the value of the glebe lands be also taken into account, the whole property of the parochial clergy, were it divided in equal shares amongst them all, would not produce for each of them 200*l.* a-year. To call this endowment "lavish"—to denominate this income "immense riches," and "enormous wealth,"—is absurd and ridiculous. The fact which I have stated needs only to be known, to make apparent the exaggeration of those figures of speech which have been employed on this subject. The phantom of the Church's wealth, which seems to haunt perpetually, and to disturb the quiet of so many of its reformers, requires only to have the light of truth let in upon it, and it instantly disappears.

It may be thought, indeed, by some, that a more nearly equal distribution of the property of the Church would be desirable. But this, it

will be observed, is quite a different question from that of the aggregate revenues of the whole body being an exhaustless mine of riches. And it will be perceived from what I have mentioned, that those persons who are forward to express commiseration for the ill-paid curates of the Established Church, and who speak feelingly of the plain justice it would be to provide each of that laborious class of ministers with an income of at least 200*l.* a-year, would certainly not find means to carry this generous design into effect by any process of arithmetic that could be applied to the property of the incumbents, except by making the two parties change places in the scale of their incomes. I am, indeed, fully persuaded that to introduce perfect equality in the incomes of the clergy, would be far from advantageous to the interests of the Church. But I would at the same time observe, that so far as a sound objection lies against a too great disparity, means have been in effective operation for some years past which will remove that objection. I allude to the dissolution of unions of parishes, and the subdivision of those which are of too large extent, and the augmentation of the incomes of the smaller benefices. It may not,

perhaps, be generally known that, since the passing of the Church Temporalities Act, in 1833, upwards of 4000*l.* a-year have been applied to augment poorly endowed parishes.

The rumours put into circulation as to the revenues of the bishops, have been even more exaggerated than these in reference to the incomes of the parochial clergy. But when the facts are fairly inquired into, instead of the prelates having, as a body, eagerly grasped at gain, and sought to aggrandize themselves out of the property belonging to them, it will be found that their long settled practice has been to claim and to receive, in addition to the small head rent of the estates assigned to them, a renewal fine of only one-fifth of the value, after deducting that rent; the remaining four-fifths being enjoyed by the numerous and respectable class of landholders to whom they have been leased for many generations. Is there any other property in the kingdom, I would ask, out of which so small a benefit is claimed by its proprietors? When the provisions of the Church Temporalities Acts shall have come into full operation, (and it is in this light that our ecclesiastical establishment must be viewed, by

all who really wish to ascertain the condition in which it will be in future,) the revenues of the episcopal body will be reduced by the payment of a heavy tax, so that their average net amount will but little exceed that of the judges of the courts of law. And when it is considered that the prelates form a portion of the peerage of the country, one of the highest estates of the realm,—a privilege of their order as ancient as the House of Peers itself, and handed down to the bishops of the Irish Church by a succession which has suffered no interruption,—a succession reaching further back than does the title of any temporal peer of Ireland; and when the income assigned them out of their properties is compared with that of even the poorest of the noble order, of which from time immemorial they form a part, it will appear to be not excessive in its amount.

The cathedral establishments of the Irish Church constitute another topic upon which much misapprehension has prevailed,—misapprehension into which, indeed, the people of England are naturally liable to fall, inasmuch as they judge of our Church by what they know of their own,—hearing, as they do, the same titles

given to the dignitaries and officers connected with the cathedrals in the two countries, while, in point of fact, as regards most of them, nothing can be more dissimilar. Instead of a stately and venerable pile, in which the full choral service of the Church is performed with due solemnity from day to day, by a choir skilled in ecclesiastical music; in this country, the buildings denominated cathedrals, are, in more than two-thirds of the dioceses, mere parish churches, and these of the humblest and simplest kind, in which the means do not exist that would enable an attempt to be made to perform the choral service. And the dignitaries and prebendaries connected with them are, with but a very few exceptions, merely parochial clergymen, engaged like others in the duties of their respective parishes, and deriving all their income from their benefices. The rank, the title, the office, indeed, of dignitary or of prebendary is conferred on them; but rarely is any emolument connected with it; and still more rarely is any residentiary house appropriated for the use of the persons who hold those offices. There are, in truth, but eight dignitaries in Ireland, out of the list of 139, who have houses assigned to them as such.

And of the prebendaries, 178 in number, not one has a residence in right of his prebend*.

Let me not, however, be misunderstood on this subject, as if I thought it an advantage to our Church to be thus circumstanced. Far from it. I am merely stating what is a fact. Had it been otherwise,—had all, or the greater number of our cathedrals been possessed of adequate endowments, and resembled those of England in more than in name, benefits in many ways would have resulted to a country circumstanced as Ireland has been. And among a people of strong religious feelings, and with a national fondness for music and susceptibility of its power, the solemn performance of our choral service might have proved no ineffectual means of recommending our sublime and impressive Liturgy to their warm affections.

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* The Tithe Commutation Act and the Church Temporalities Act have, by their combined operation, reduced the amount of property formerly belonging to the dignitaries and prebendaries, by at least one-third; and still further reductions are rapidly taking place, by the suspension of dignities and the disappropriation of their emoluments. Of the 178 prebends, 105 never possessed any income whatever, except that arising from the benefices with care of souls which the prebendaries held, and in which they officiated as parochial clergymen.

Another subject in regard to which also there has been much misconception, is the union of parishes. This has been a fruitful topic of invective against the Church. And it has been maintained that the abuses of the Establishment will not be at an end until every union is severed, and every parish has its own appointed minister living within its bounds, and devoting himself to its care. And, truly, if a parish in Ireland were always what the designation would lead men to suppose it to be, this might be a just view of the case. The term parish being generally understood to signify a district sufficient in extent and population to require the attention of a clergyman, and affording an income adequate to his maintenance. This, however, is by no means the case. Some of what are called parishes in Ireland are merely the sites of old religious houses, the names of which they continue to bear. And to complain of their being united together, would be to complain that there is a union of streets in a town under one pastor, or a union of fields in a rural district under a single minister. A remarkable instance of this occurs in the city of Cork, where, in the union of which the chancellor of the diocese is the

incumbent, one of the parishes (when I presided over that see) was a distillery, and another was a sugar-house. So much may people be misled by mere lists of names of parishes, without inquiring what in reality those names designate.

A fair examination into the causes which have generally led to the joining together of parishes under one incumbent, would remove much of the obloquy which has been thrown upon the Church on that account; perhaps, would transfer the censure to very different parties from those on whom it is now made to fall. I say, the causes which have generally led to the uniting of parishes—for, with a very few exceptions, it will be found that the occasion of the formation of unions has been the utter inadequacy of a single parish to afford the means of support to a minister for the performance of the spiritual duties of it. This inadequacy has chiefly arisen from two causes. One of them, the resolution which was passed by the Irish House of Commons, in the year 1735, to resist the payment of the tithe of agistment, which produced such a diminution of the incomes of the clergy in most parts of Ireland, then greatly devoted to pasturage, that several pa-

rishes had to be joined together to make out a sufficient subsistence for a minister. And it is only of late years that, in consequence of the great extension of tillage, the value of benefices has been so considerably increased, that a separation of united parishes into distinct benefices could be adopted to any extent. The other cause, and one for which no remedy has been found, is the impropriation of the whole, or nearly the whole, of the ecclesiastical revenues in a great number of parishes, without any provision being made by the impropriator, or a totally insufficient one, for the support of a clergyman to attend in each of them to the spiritual wants of the parishioners. For instance, in the portion of this diocese which is situated in the county of Louth, there are seven parishes wholly destitute of income; and four other parishes in the same county have incomes of less than 21*l.* a-year each. How is it possible that the spiritual duties of such districts can be attended to, unless they are annexed to parishes which afford means of support to a minister?

It is worthy of being borne in mind by those whose inclination leads them to attack the Church, and by those also who sincerely desire

its improvement, that a Royal Commission was appointed, fifteen years ago, to inquire into the unions of parishes, and to report on the fitness and practicability of dissolving them. A majority of the commissioners were laymen of high character and station. The result of their inquiries (which proceeded only as far as the province of Armagh) was, that in regard to the unions in that portion of Ireland, 110 in number, there were 48 which it would be either impracticable or unadvisable to sever. Such a statement, proceeding from such a quarter, ought to lead people to pause before they condemn in a sweeping and indiscriminate manner, the existence of any unions whatever of parishes. But, I would also add, that so far as it is desirable that a dissolution of these unions should take place, an opportunity is provided for severing them as vacancies occur. And within the last eleven years 53 have been dissolved.

It is unnecessary for me to make any remark upon the subject of pluralities of benefices, one which has afforded occasion for reproach against our Church, for that occasion is now altogether cut off. The power of granting a dispensation for holding a plurality of benefices is vested in

me as Primate, and, having gradually reduced the number of applications, by arrangements which I made, I, sixteen years ago, with the full concurrence of my episcopal brethren, and of the Government of the day, put a complete stop to the issuing of any dispensations for that purpose.

So far with regard to the revenues of the Church, and the alleged abuses with reference thereto, arising from unions and pluralities. It is asserted, however, that although the average income of the parochial clergy may not be too large, yet that the number of clergymen is too great as compared with the number of the members of the Established Church, and the amount of duty which they have to perform; and that, in this way, therefore, the Protestant Establishment is on too extensive a scale, and ought to be retrenched. I shall not pause here to enter into a statement of the good offices, both temporal and spiritual, which it is the bounden duty of the clergy to render, as occasion offers, to their Roman Catholic parishioners—good offices which I know *are* rendered willingly, and I know are accepted with gratitude by them; and which have tended to alleviate the misery of the

poorer classes, to diffuse comforts among them, and to dissipate in some degree the darkness of ignorance and of superstition, which otherwise would have prevailed more intensely in Ireland. But I proceed at once to a very convincing proof that the number of the clergy is not too large. It is this, that seven hundred and forty of them are assistant-curates, whose services are paid for by the incumbents themselves; and that, although the value of Church property has within the last twenty years been diminished by more than one-fourth of its former amount, the number of stipendiary curates supported by the beneficed clergy out of their reduced incomes, instead of being diminished has been increased by the large number of one hundred and eighty-five within that period*. In this diocese there are 47 more clergymen employed, than when it first came under my superintendence.

Another proof that the number of the clergy for whom the means of support are provided out of the revenues of the Church, instead of being

* By a mistake into which I was led by a reference to a wrong return, I stated, when delivering the Charge, that the increase which had taken place was two hundred and seventy. The number is correctly given above, one hundred and eighty-five.

too great is really insufficient for the wants of the people, is furnished by the remarkable fact, that a society was formed some years ago for maintaining, by means of private voluntary subscriptions, additional curates in those districts in which the scantiness of the existing endowment, combined with the extent of the territory or the largeness of the population, rendered it an imperative duty thus to provide increased spiritual instruction for the people. No one can read the striking facts set forth in the annual reports of that valuable and most interesting society, without being convinced that the number of clergy for whom an endowment is provided, is inadequate duly to supply the spiritual wants of the people, and that if they are not increased in this way, many hundred souls would be left neglected, devoid of the means of grace, and exposed to the danger of renouncing their religion.

A still further proof that our Establishment is not too large for the wants of the country, is found in the additional churches built every year, and the enlargement of old ones, effected principally, if not solely, by means of private subscriptions. And here I must allude to another misconception, which seems to exist in

England, namely, that a rate is levied on parishes for the purpose of erecting and repairing our churches. In the recent publication on the subject of the Irish Church, to which I before alluded, this is put forward as being the fact, and as entailing an especial hardship on the Roman catholic parishioners. The author, though he undertook to write for the instruction of the public, was evidently ignorant that church cess has been done away with altogether, and that our churches are now built, and repaired, and all the requisites for the celebration of divine service are supplied, out of the property which belonged to the bishops and clergy. The point, however, to which I was going to advert was this —the sum of money which the Ecclesiastical Commissioners are enabled to expend upon the building and enlargement of churches is so inadequate, as compared with what is required and what ought to be done in this way, that, as their official letter to the Lord Lieutenant states, there are 244 applications now lying before their Board for the enlargement of churches, some of them of a most urgent nature, which they are as yet unable to comply with. Within the last twelve years upwards of £100,000 have been contri-

buted out of private funds for the building and enlarging of churches—a very substantial proof as well of the necessity of increased accommodation, as of the inadequacy of the revenues of the Establishment to meet its wants, and also of the great interest which the members of our Church take in promoting its welfare. That Church cannot be in a withering, pining, and decaying state which manifests such vigour, and produces such abundant fruit as this in the service and to the glory of God. In our own diocese, we have erected within the last twelve years thirteen new additional churches; and, have obtained but a small sum from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners towards the completing of only two of them. The rest have been built wholly out of private funds. And besides these new churches added to our list, fifteen of the old ones have been enlarged. It gives me sincere pleasure to find, on examining the reports which the rural deans have sent in—(and for the pains which they have taken in collecting the information contained in their reports, I beg to offer to them my best acknowledgments)—that the new churches which we have built are all well attended. As an instance and proof of the necessity which existed

for thus providing additional accommodation for our increasing congregations, I may mention the gratifying fact, that having, within a circuit of a very few miles round this city, erected in the course of a short period four additional churches in rural districts, to each of which an incumbent was appointed, every one of them has a full congregation, and yet at the same time the old parish churches, from which they are the offsets, are as largely attended as before these additional places of worship were built.—Nor is it to be said, by way of weakening the conclusion to be drawn from these facts, that they relate to a part of the country peculiarly favourable for advancing the interests of the Established Church. The document lately submitted to Government by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners furnishes incontestible proof of the need which exists in the southern dioceses also for enlarging the churches, to accommodate the increased number of members belonging to our communion*. In many districts they are compelled to make use of inconvenient school-houses as places of worship.

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* See Appendix A., p. 43.

And here I would introduce a remark,—one, it might be thought, so obvious that it would not need to be brought forward, but which, nevertheless, seems to be unheeded by those who institute a strict comparison between the relative number of the clergy and the number of the members of the Established Church; and thence draw an inference that a reduction might be made in the former, without injury to the spiritual welfare of the latter. It betrays great ignorance, or want of consideration of the subject, to suppose that the number of clergymen requisite for the due discharge of the ministerial duties, is to be measured by a simple reference to the mere number of those who reside in the parish irrespectively of the extent and the nature of the district over which they may be dispersed. One hundred persons, dwelling in cottages thinly scattered over a space of several miles, in an unfrequented part of the country, intersected with mountains and moors, and with scarcely a bye-road to connect their habitations together, would occupy a pastor more laboriously than five hundred persons in a town. And although a minister might be able to attend to two towns with such a population, if nearly adjoining each

other, it would be a very erroneous conclusion to draw from this, that a minister would be able to discharge the duties of two such rural districts as I have described, were they to be united together in order to reduce the number of the clergy. The labour would be beyond his physical powers. And I would ask, are the members of the Church to be neglected, because they may be thinly scattered over some parts of the country? Are they to be deprived of the comfort of religious privileges for no fault of theirs, but because they have the misfortune of being few in number, and, in being so, are exposed to the greater temptation to forsake the faith to which they belong, and to join that of the multitude around them?

I must, before I conclude, refer to two other points respecting which much reproach has been thrown upon the Established Church—I mean sinecures and non-residence. In regard to the former, one word will suffice: the Church Temporalities Acts of 1833 and 1834 have effectually secured their suppression according as they severally fall vacant. Whether it was wise to leave no situation free from labour and responsibility, in which a faithful minister, worn out in

the discharge of onerous duties, might find a maintenance and place of rest in which to end his days, need not now to be discussed. The suppression of all sinecures has been steadily going on, under the powers given for that purpose by the statutes to which I have referred.

In regard to non-residence, the misrepresentations that have been put into circulation by the enemies of the Church have been of the most exaggerated description. So far from the Irish Church being open to censure above other Churches on this account, we have the testimony of the late Archbishop Laurence—himself an Englishman, long and well acquainted with the ecclesiastical affairs of England—that the Irish clergy were more generally resident than their English brethren on their benefices. This was said twenty years ago, and there has been no falling off in this respect since then,—far, indeed, from it. In estimating clerical non-residence, those of course ought to be considered as allowably exempt, who are prevented from residing by sickness, infirmity, old age, or any other inevitable Providential hindrance. And the few surviving clergymen who obtained a plurality of benefices in former years, and who reside either

alternately on both, or wholly on one of them, must be considered as entitled to the same exemption. In this diocese, after making these allowable deductions which I have alluded to, there is not one of the parochial clergy who can be represented as a non-resident. Illness of a serious character excuses the temporary absence of two of our members; and the only other two who do not reside in the diocese, are attending to the duties of the clerical appointments which they hold in a different part of the country. And I would add, that, having made inquiry myself last year from every bishop with regard to every diocese in Ireland, I am prepared to assert, that the cases of non-residence are exceedingly few in number; and as to some of those few, there are no glebe-houses in their parishes for the clergymen to reside in, nor the means of building houses, owing to the miserable smallness of their incomes. Accustomed as our English brethren are to draw from a large and liberal fund, for advances of money towards the building of glebe-houses, they may not be aware that no such assistance is now provided in Ireland, and that the clergy have to supply for themselves the means of erecting their parsonage-houses.

But the constant residence of the clergy, the moderate amount of their average income, the rapid disappearance of pluralities and sinecures—these, though they testify much in reply to the unfounded and unjust accusations brought against our Establishment by its enemies, are but external matters. The life, the energy, the value, the usefulness of the Church, depend still more on the personal character, and the official qualifications of its ministers. And here I must bear my willing, my happy testimony, to the great improvement which has been steadily going on for several years in the clergy, and to their efficiency as a body of Christian pastors. In a society composed of frail and finite beings, it is impossible but that offences must come. That the Irish clergy are not without some unworthy members, is unreservedly admitted: but admitted in a sense which must apply to the members of every other Church, of every other institution of equal magnitude and standing. The late Bishop Jebb, in his speech delivered in the House of Lords, in the year 1824, upon the state of our Church, thus expressed his opinion:—"The Irish clergy are a most improving body. This" (he proceeds to say) "I can myself attest from my

own knowledge, acquired during twenty-five years of close and diligent attention to the subject. The improvement has been striking—I might almost say it has been marvellous; it has also been progressive, and I see not any likelihood of its diminution. Those in authority are becoming more and more disposed to exercise a mild, but firm and efficient, discipline—those under authority, more and more solicitous to approve themselves not only to their earthly superiors, but to Him whose commission they bear, and before whose judgment-seat they must render a strict account." Such was the character of the Irish clergy, drawn by that distinguished prelate; and I can confirm its truth and accuracy. Looking back to the period when I was raised to the episcopal office, forty years ago, and comparing the internal condition of the Church now, with what it was then, the improvement is most marked and gratifying. The growth in zeal, in diligence, in devotedness to their sacred employment, in earnestness and laborious exertion on the part of the clergy, call for devout gratitude to Him from whom the ability comes, which has enabled them thus to will and to do of His good pleasure. Their increased attainments in pro-

fessional learning has been equally observable, and is to be traced to the efficiency of the divinity school of our university, and the care and labour there bestowed on the candidates for the ministry by the respective lecturers, and especially by the learned and excellent Regius Professor, who has so long presided over that school*. The generally large and regular attendance of the people at our churches—the numbers habitually and devoutly approaching the Lord's table—the attention on the part of parents in sending their children to be catechised, and of the clergy in catechising, and in superintending the instruction given in schools—all evince an awakened anxiety for religious improvement,—all tend to assure us that we are not forsaken of God, but, we may humbly hope, are partaking of His favour and protection.

In this diocese, which is in so great a degree a rural one, it is satisfactory to me to see that most even of our country churches have evening as well as morning service performed in them every Sunday, during the summer months at least; and in many of them throughout the

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* See Appendix B., p. 47.

whole year. In the great majority of them, also, the holy communion is celebrated, not merely on the great festivals, but every month; and, on an average, one-fifth of the congregation habitually partake of it. It affords me peculiar pleasure likewise, to perceive the attention which is given to the religious instruction of the children on the Lord's day; and that, in this diocese, consisting as it does of but 104 benefices, there are in the Sunday schools under the superintendence of the clergy more than 12,000 children, and 940 gratuitous teachers. It is also cheering to me to find, that our daily schools are in a most encouraging and hopeful state—full of promise as to the fruit they will bear in future years. It is chiefly by your exertions, my reverend brethren, that 279 schools have been established in your parishes, most of them supported by private bounty, and affording a Christian education to upwards of 22,000 children; 10,000 of whom are members of our church, 5,000 are Protestant Dissenters, and 7,000 are Roman Catholics: so successful have been your efforts in effecting their united education. Almost all these schools are in connexion with the Church Education Society, in behalf of

which I applied to the Government, as you are aware, for aid, but applied in vain. I deeply lament that the assistance of the State has not been vouchsafed to us. The refusal, however, of pecuniary support from the Government does not abate the value of our schools, nor diminish the importance of maintaining them to the utmost of our power. We did not establish them in factious opposition to those of Government: they are the old schools of the country, established because we felt that without such institutions for the young, under our own superintendence, and conducted on principles of which we approve, we should be without one of the most important and effective means of doing good to those committed to our care. Your constant and anxious superintendence of them, my reverend brethren, has been most praiseworthy. Relax not your efforts to render them more and more efficient in every respect. And may the Divine blessing rest on all the abundant labours in which you are engaged, for the edification of the people both young and old; and may that blessing descend on the bishops and clergy of every other diocese in Ireland! We are all "one body," and have "one hope of

our calling." Let brotherly love continue, and abound!

At my advanced time of life, it may not be given me to see the day when the perils that surround the Irish Church shall have disappeared, and the beams of temporal prosperity shine once more upon it. The clouds that now overhang and darken its worldly prospects may not be dispersed, before my eyes are closed in death; but, if it should be so, I shall, nevertheless, bless God that the Church which I leave in earthly troubles and adversity, is in a state of spiritual health, and life, and order, and devotedness, such as, I believe, never adorned it in any former period of its history. These are favours bestowed on it by God's mercy and goodness. These are blessings which are not in the power of States to give or to take away. They are of higher value and nobler worth than any worldly prosperity.

And is it when our Church is thus improved, that our brethren in England will allow it to be overthrown? To them we have a right to look for sympathy, for encouragement, and for aid. One in doctrine, discipline, government, and worship, the Churches of England and Ireland

were united together, and, as we were led to believe, united indissolubly and for ever, at the period of the union of the kingdoms. To the people of England, who, when our legislature was incorporated with theirs, entered into a solemn treaty with us to preserve our Church as the Established Church of the country; and who, as a further security for the permanence of that establishment, have called upon the Sovereign to promise to preserve "inviolably" the "settlement" of the "United Church,"—to the people of England we naturally look for effectual aid in guarding the interests of that Church which they have thus pledged themselves to uphold*. And, at the same time,

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* Article Fifth of the Union of Great Britain and Ireland, 2nd July, 1800:—"That it be the Fifth Article of Union, that the Churches of England and Ireland as now by law established, be united into one Protestant Episcopal Church, to be called the United Church of England and Ireland; and that the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of the said United Church shall be, and shall remain in full force for ever, as the same are now by law established for the Church of England; and that the continuance and preservation of the said United Church, *as the Established Church* of England and Ireland, shall be deemed and taken to be an essential and fundamental part of the Union."

Coronation Service.—"Will you maintain and preserve

we owe it to the people of England to remove the deceptions which are practised upon them by those enemies of our Church who circulate misstatements respecting it, and who seek to make it appear undeserving of their succour. It is due to them, on our part, to show that this Church, which is a part of theirs, is not the corrupt mass of abuses—is not the "bad" and "mischievous institution," which those who are labouring to effect its downfall represent it to be; but that it is, in truth, worthy of their protection, their sympathy, and their support. But we must not rely on "an arm of flesh," though it is our wisdom to appeal to those whose duty it is to render us aid. "Our help standeth in the name of the Lord." To Him we are to look as able to preserve us—"who hath delivered us, and doth deliver—in whom we trust that He will yet deliver us." Our prayer must be made unto Him.

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inviolably the settlement of the United Church of England and Ireland, and the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government thereof, as by law established within England and Ireland, and the territories thereinto belonging? And will you preserve unto the bishops and clergy of England and Ireland, and to the Churches there committed to their charge, all such rights and privileges as by law do, or shall appertain to them or any of them? All this I promise to do."

And, although we would endeavour to vindicate our Church in the sight of men, from aspersions unjustly cast upon it; yet, when we draw near to God to offer our supplications to Him, we must humble ourselves before Him, ever remembering our unprofitableness in his sight—our failures in the performance of our duties—our sinfulness—our unworthiness. On His mercy we must cast ourselves, relying only on the intercession of our Saviour to obtain his forgiveness and blessing. Let us, then, lift up our hearts with our hands to Him that dwelleth in the heavens, and say, "O Lord, we beseech thee, let thy continual pity cleanse and defend thy Church: and because it cannot continue in safety without thy succour, preserve it evermore by thy help and goodness, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

APPENDIX.

Appendix A.

Extract from the "Correspondence between the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and the Irish Ecclesiastical Commissioners," in reference to the application of a portion of the Perpetuity Fund to the building and repairing of churches in Ireland. Ordered, by the House of Commons, to be printed. 5th Aug. 1845."

"*Query*, No. 1.—It is stated that the increase of congregations in several places renders the necessity of the enlargement of churches urgent; I request, therefore, that you will inform me what is the number of those places or parishes where they are situated, and what is the extent of the increase in the number of the members of the Established Church in these localities, since the religious census was taken by Lord Grey's Government in 1834.

"*Answer.*—Having already stated in the architect's report, sent to your Excellency, that there are in all 244 applications for enlargement, and having stated that some of these were of a very urgent nature, the Commissioners have selected the following parishes as specimens of the cases referred to, adding such particulars, for the information of your Excellency, as the documents in the office enable them to furnish.

"*Parish of Ballymore, Diocese of Armagh.*—Stated in memorial, dated 28th January, 1845, from minister and churchwardens, that the church is supposed to seat about 450; Protestant population being 3,135. Large subscriptions tendered.

"*Parish of Carrickmacross, Diocese of Clogher.*—Stated by letter from Rev. W. Thompson, that in 1841 the congregation had very much increased, and that there was a very great want of church accommodation. Large subscriptions tendered.

"*Parish of Kilmore, Diocese of Clogher.*—Stated in letter from the Rev. J. Whitstone, dated July, 1836, that there are only twenty-seven pews in the church, capable of accommodating 189 persons; and the Protestant population 630. He thinks forty families would cheerfully pay for accommodation.

"*Parish of Castletown Delvin, Diocese of Meath.*—Stated by the Rev. D. Dunne, in 1842, 'We are lamentably in want of room, though the aisle is packed as full as it can hold on benches.'

"*Parish of Enniskeen, Diocese of Meath.*—Stated in 1836, by the Rev. J. W. Charleton, that several families in the parish have no seats in the church; and in 1840, that, with a view to afford accommodation, the pews were broken up into single sittings, and yet the church is not adequate, by any means, to meet the wants of the parish.

"*Parish of Kilmore, Diocese of Down.*—Stated in 1837, in memorial from parishioners, that the church holds at present 110 persons conveniently, while the congregation is upwards of 700. Also in 1844, that *the congregation, being pent up in the church like sheep in a crib in Smithfield, could endure it no longer, and were determined to avail themselves of two dissenting houses near the church.*

"*Parish of Tamlaghtfinlagan, Diocese of Derry.*—Stated in 1841, by the Rev. O. M'Causland, that from the increase of congregation the church was incapable of receiving many worshippers, who are anxious to attend. Protestant population 550; church accommodation 120.

"*Parish of Carrickfergus, Diocese of Connor.*—Stated by the Very Rev. Dean Chaine, in 1841, that the congregation has increased very much; that a gallery could be erected at

the cost of 150*l.*, of which sum he would give 100*l.*, and would undertake the work, if the Board would next year grant him 50*l.*; and *should this be refused many of the congregation would be lost to the Church.*

"*Parish of Kilconriola, Diocese of Connor.*—Stated by the Rev. H. Cumming, in 1835, that though the church was enlarged a few years ago, it does not contain more than 280 persons, and that there are 960 Protestants entitled to accommodation in it.

"*Parish of Cavan, Diocese of Kilmore.*—Stated in a memorial, dated 13th December, 1841, that the parishioners deplore the exclusion of so many souls from the House of God: additional accommodation being required for 220 persons. Considerable subscriptions in aid tendered.

"*Parish of Outragh, Diocese of Kilmore.*—Stated in a memorial signed by 45 heads of families, and dated 1843, that the church has been for many years too small to accommodate the parishioners; the necessity of enlarging strongly certified by the Bishop of Kilmore.

"*Parish of Abbeyleix, Diocese of Leighlin.*—Stated in 1842, by the Hon. and Rev. W. Wingfield, that the church requires enlargement, the Protestant population having increased, since the last Protestant census, from 1008 to at least 1300. Subscriptions to the amount of 400*l.* tendered.

"*Parish of Lea, Diocese of Kildare.*—Stated in resolutions of vestry, in 1840, that additional accommodation was required for at least 150 persons. Strongly recommended by the Bishop of Kildare.

"*Parish of Abbeystrewry, Diocese of Ross.*—Stated in memorial from parishioners in 1837, that a gallery was required, many parishioners being unable to attend Divine Service for want of room; and afterwards, in a memorial from minister and parishioners, that some families were unable to attend in the church since 1837, and imploring the Board to consider their case.

"*Parish of Cove, Diocese of Cloyne.*—Stated in 1841, by the Rev. J. E. Nash, that *a dissenting house is about to be erected in consequence of the want of church accommodation;* and one of the grounds of the appeal is, that the number of parishioners in the town is 1500, while there is only accommodation in the parish church for 700 persons.

"*Parish of Skull, Diocese of Cork.*—Stated in 1840, by the rector and curate, that the church accommodation is from 300 to 400, and that additional accommodation is required for 800 persons.

"*Skull Chapel of Ease, Diocese of Cork.*—Stated in 1844, by the Rev. J. Triphook, that the district contains 700 Protestants, while the church, when filled to repletion, holds but 200 persons.

"*Parish of Kilmood, Diocese of Down.*—Church accommodation, in 1834, for 300 persons. Protestant population, 2219. Additional accommodation urgently called for.

"*Parish of Armoy, Diocese of Connor.*—Church accommodation, in 1836, for 100 persons, and there are 120 families of the Established Church. Strongly urged by the Bishop of Down.

"As to 'the extent of the increase in the number of the members of the Established Church in those localities since the religious census was taken by Lord Grey's Government in 1834,'

"The Commissioners have not the means of supplying this part of the required information; and as it would seem that your Excellency's letter implied, that at that date (1834) there was a full supply of church accommodation, the Commissioners desire to add that, from the documents in their office, it appears that at, and prior to, that period, several churches required to be enlarged."

Appendix B.

In order to obtain a Divinity Testimonium in Trinity College, Dublin, (without which, the Irish bishops long since made it a rule that they would not admit any candidate into Holy Orders,*) it is necessary that the student should attend lectures in Divinity during two years, keeping the three terms in each year, as well as passing an examination: so that his diligent *residence* at the University for two years is imperative. I subjoin the following statement for the information of persons in England who may not have had an opportunity of meeting with an account of the course of instruction pursued in the Divinity School of Trinity College. It will enable them to form some idea of the efficiency of the plan which is adopted, and the very great attention that is given to this most important branch of education by the University. The information which follows is drawn from the University Calendar.

During the first year, the student (who may commence the Divinity course in his senior sophister year,—the fourth year after his entrance into the University) is required to attend the lectures of Archbishop King's Lecturer in Divinity, together with the lectures of one of his assistants,—six assistants being assigned to him from among the Junior Fellows, for the instruction of the whole class, consisting of about two hundred. The lectures are delivered by the former at eleven o'clock, and by the latter at one o'clock, on Monday and Thursday; and in Trinity Term on Monday, Thursday, and Saturday. The subjects on which Archbishop King's Lecturer treats in his lectures are, during two terms, the Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion; and in the third term the Socinian Controversy. The books in which his

* This rule has, with a very few exceptions, been steadily adhered to.

Assistants lecture, and in which the students must prepare themselves to answer his questions, are :

Michaelmas Term.—St. Luke's Gospel, in Greek, as the basis of a harmony.

Hilary Term.—St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, in Greek.

Trinity Term.—Bishop Pearson on the Creed, Articles i. ii. and viii.

At the end of Trinity Term an examination of the whole class is held by Archbishop King's Lecturer. The course for the examination is as follows :

Greek.—The four Gospels, and St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans.

Evidences.—Paley's Evidences : Butler's Analogy ; Newton on the Prophecies, Dissertations i. to xiii. inclusive, xviii. xix. xx. xxxi.

Socinian Controversy.—Pearson on the Creed, Arts. i. ii. and viii. Magee on the Atonement, vol. 1. of the edition in 3 vols.

Unless the student passes this examination, he is not permitted to proceed in the course for the second year, under the Regius Professor of Divinity. Should the candidate fail in passing the examination it is left to the examiners to determine whether he shall be kept back until the next annual examination, or present himself again to be examined at the end of one of the intervening terms.

An examination for prizes is held by Archbishop King's Lecturer in Michaelmas Term. Attendance on it is not compulsory ; and such students only can be candidates for the prizes as are selected by the examiners at the general Divinity Examination, held at the end of the preceding Trinity Term. The subjects of the course examined in for the prizes, in addition to those appointed for the general Divinity examination, are as follows :

Greek.—The Acts of the Apostles.

Evidences.—Paley's Horæ Paulinæ. Chalmers' Natural Theology. Chalmers on the Miraculous and Internal Evi-

dences of the Christian Religion. Douglas' Criterion of Miracles. Bishop Sherlock's Discourses and Dissertations on Prophecy. Davison on Prophecy.

Socinian Controversy.—Magee on the Atonement, vols. ii. and iii. Pearson on the Creed, the Articles omitted in the general examination.

Candidates for the prizes are also expected to be acquainted with the principal questions discussed in the public course of lectures delivered by Archbishop King's Lecturer, during the year of their attendance on his lectures; and to have examined, in the writers referred to by him, the infidel arguments, at least on the following points:

On the Credibility of a Revelation. On the Sufficiency of the proof of a Revelation from Miracle and Prophecy.

On the possibility of establishing the Reality of Miracles by Testimony.

On the Place of Prophecy in the proof of Christian Revelation.

Two prizes are given to the best answerers: and certificates to such as answer sufficiently. Extra prizes are also frequently given by the Board, at the recommendation of the examiners.

Such is the course of instruction for the Divinity Student during the first year, and the means of improvement and of distinction which are opened to him.

To the Regius Professor of Divinity are assigned six assistants from among the Junior Fellows. And during the second year, the student is required to attend the Professor's lectures, at eleven o'clock, and one of his Assistant's lectures at one o'clock, on Tuesday and Friday; and in Trinity Term, on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday. The Professor lectures on the Criticism and Interpretation of the Bible; the Articles and Liturgy of the United Church of England and Ireland; and the Controversy with the Church of Rome. The Assistants lecture on the following subjects:

Michaelmas Term.—Ecclesiastical History.

Hilary Term.—Burnet on the Thirty-nine Articles.

Trinity Term.—Burnet on the Thirty-nine Articles.

At the end of Trinity Term, an examination of the whole class is held, and the students who pass it are arranged in three classes, according to their respective answering. The course appointed for this examination is as follows :—

Greek.—St. Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews.

Ecclesiastical History.—Mosheim's History of the Church. (Soames' edition.) Vols. i. iii. and iv.

Liturgy and Church Government.—Wheatley on the Book of Common Prayer. Potter on Church Government, edited by the Rev. J. C. Crosthwaite.

Articles of Religion.—Bishop Burnet's Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles.

Roman Catholic Controversy.—Bishop Taylor's Preservative against Popery, part I. The candidates for the first and second classes are examined also in the second part.

Unless a student passes this examination, he cannot obtain a Divinity Testimonium.

An annual examination for prizes is held by the Regius Professor in the month of November. Attendance on this examination is not compulsory. It continues for two days, during four hours each day ; on the morning of the first day, in the Old Testament, on the afternoon in the New Testament; on the morning of the second day in Ecclesiastical History, and on the afternoon of the second day, in the Creeds, Articles, and Liturgy of the Church. The following extract from the card published by the present Professor, contains the list of books recommended to candidates:

"In reference to the first two parts, the Professor of Divinity wishes it to be distinctly understood, that he does not so much require a knowledge of the opinions of any particular commentator, as a general acquaintance with the Bible itself. He considers the commentary of Patrick, Lowth, and Whitby,

taken as a whole, to be the best; but to the young student he would particularly recommend Elsley and Slade's Annotations on the New Testament. Nor can he (though he differs from them on some important subjects) forbear to express his approbation of Doddridge's and Scott's Commentaries. More information will be acquired by consulting separate treatises on different parts of the Scriptures, as Dean Graves's Lectures on the last four Books of Moses, and Bishop Newton on the Prophecies.

"In recommending the following list of books to the candidates for the premium given at his examination, the Professor does not wish to limit them to the particular works mentioned in it, but these books will point out the extent of the information required.

Townson on the Gospels, and the Resurrection.
Davison on Prophecy.
Paley's Evidences.
Paley's Horæ Paulinæ.
Butler's Analogy.
Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History.
Carwithen's History of the Church of England.
Bp. Elrington on the Validity of the English Ordination.
Bp. Marsh's Comparative View.
Jewel's Apology.
Burnet on the Thirty-nine Articles.
Pearson on the Creed.
Waterland on the Athanasian Creed.
Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity, Books iii. and v.
Laurence's Bampton Lectures.
Mant, or Wheatley, on the Common Prayer."

The Regius Professor, the Rev. Dr. Elrington, has for the last fifteen years published the questions proposed to the Candidates at this Annual Examination.

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